

The Form of
Church-Government
 To be used in the
Church of England
 AND
IRELAND:

Agreed upon by the
LORDS and COMMONS
 Assembled in
PARLIAMENT,
 After advice had with the Assembly of
DIVINES.

Die Martis 29 August. 1648.

O Rdered by the Lords Assembled in Parliament, That the
 Form of Church-Government to be used in the Church
 of England and Ireland, be forthwith printed and published.

Ioh. Brown Cler. Parliamentorum.

Imprinted at London for John Wright at the Kings Head
 in the old Bayley. 1648.

Printed by W. B. Mason for John Wright at the Kings Head
in the Old Bailey. 1648.

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in the Old Bailey. 1648.



Die Martis 29 August. 1648.

**The Form of Church-Government to be used
in the Churches of *England* and *Ireland*.**



Beit Ordered and Ordained by the Lords and Commons in Parliament assembled, and by authority of the same; That all Parishes and places whatsoever within the Kingdome of *England* and Dominion of *Wales* (aswell priviledged places and exempt Jurisdictions as others) be brought under the Government of Congregationall, Classicall, Provincicall, and Nationall Assemblies, Provided that the Chappels or places in the Houses of the King and his Children, and the Chappels or places in the Houses of the Peeres of this Realme, shall continue free for the exercise of divine duties to be performed according to the directory and not otherwise.

That there be forthwith a choice made of Elders throughout the Kingdome of *England* and Dominion of *Wales*, in the respective Churches and Chappels, according to such Directions as hereafter follow; and all Classes and Parochiall Congregations are respectively hereby

authorized and required forthwith effectually to proceed therein accordingly.

Directions for the Election of Parochiall and Congregationall Elders.

1. **T**hat notice of the Election of Parochiall and Congregationall Elders, and of the time when it shall be, be given by the Minister in the publike Assembly the next Lords day but one before, and that on the said Lords day a Sermon be preached preparatory to that weighty businesse.

2. That the ruling Elders of a Parochiall and Congregationall Eldership, shall be chosen by the severall Ministers and Members of that Congregation respectively, or the major part of them there assembled, being such as have taken the Nationall Covenant, and are not persons under age, nor servants that have no families.

3. That such shall be chosen for ruling Elders as are men of a good understanding in matters of Religion, sound in the faith, prudent, discreet, grave, and of unblameable conversation, and willing to undergoe the said Office.

4. That no man be chosen for a ruling Elder, but only for one Congregation, and that in the place where his most settled dwelling and imployment doth lye.

5. That when any ruling Elder is to be chosen where an Eldership is constituted, it be done by the Eldership with the consent and approbation of the people of that Congregation.

6. That it shall be lawfull for the Congregation respectively, or any other persons, to exhibite exceptions against any persons elected as aforesaid, touching the right of his election, the qualification of the person before mentioned, or touching matter of Ignorance or Scandal

dall hereafter mentioned, to such persons as are hereafter appointed to receive the said Exceptions.

Concerning the Tryers and Judges of the integrity and ability of such as are to be chosen Elders in the Province of London, and of the Inns of Court.

1. **T**Hese persons following shall be Tryers and Judges of the integrity and ability of such as are chosen Congregationall Elders in the severall Classes within the Province of London, and of the dueness of their Election according to the rules and directions hereafter expressed:

The first Classis.

Ministers.

DOctor Will. Gouge of Black Friars, Mr. George Walker of John Evangelist, Mr. Lazarus Seaman of Alhallowes in Breadstreet. Others, Mr. Rich. Brown Esq; of Black Friars, Mr. Rich. Turner Senior of Austines Parish, Mr. Will. Kendall of Alhallowes in Breadstreet, John Clarke Doctor of Physick of Martins Ludgate, Mr. Thomas Steines of Mildred in Breadstreet, Mr. Christopher Meredith of Faiths.

The second Classis.

Ministers.

MAfter William Reyner of John Baptists, Mr. Charles Offspring of Antholins, Mr. William Thomas of Pancras Soper-Lane. Others, Mr. Alex. Iones of John Baptists, Mr. Ralph Triplet of Nicholas Cole-Abbey, Mr. Thomas Coffin of Michael Royall, Mr. James Hayes of Bennet Sheerhogge, Mr. John Cock of James Garlickhith, Mr. Philip Owen of Mary Magdalines Old Fish-street.

The third Classis.

Ministers.

MAfter Humphrey Chambers of Stephens Walbrook, Mr. John Rawlinson of Mary Ab-Church, Mr. John

Cardell of Alhallowes Lumbard-street. Others, Mr. *John Warner* Alderman of Stephens Walbrooke, Mr. *Robert Sweet* of Mary Woolnoth, Mr. *Michael Herring* of Mary Woolchurch, Mr. *Rich. Teung* of Alhallowes Lumbard-street, Mr. *Rich. Warner* of Mary Ab-Church, Mr. *Robert Mead* of Laurence Pountney.

The fourth Classis.

Ministers.

M After *John Lee* of Mary on the Hill, *Mr. Joseph Garyl* of Magnus, *Mr. Fulk Bellers* of Michael Cornhill. Others, Master *James Bunce* Alderman of Bennet Grace-Church, *Mr. Edward Hooker* of Mary on the Hill, *Mr. John Bellamy* of Michael Cornhill, *Mr. John Gyes* of Andrew in Hubbert, *Mr. John Hasler* of Magnes, *Mr. William Bramwith* of Peters Cornhill.

The fifth class.

Ministers.

M After *John Conant* of Botolph Aldersgate, Mr. *Anthony Tuckney* of Michael at Corne, *alias* Querne, Mr. *Simeon Ashe* of Brides. Others, Sir *John Wollaston* Knight of John Zacharies, Mr. *Edw. Honywood* of Michael at Corne, *alias* Querne, Mr. *William Hart* of Christ-Church, Mr. *John Johnson* of Botolph Aldersgate, Mr. *Rich. Flood* of Peters Cheape, Mr. *John Sherman* of Anne Aldersgate.

The sixth Classis.

The sixth Classis.

Ministers.

M After *Edmond Calamy* of *Mary Aldermanbury*, *Mr. John Arrowsmith* of *Martins Iremonger Lane*, *Mr. Arther Jackson* of *Michaels Woodstreet*. Others, *Mr. Walter Boothby* of *Mary Aldermanbury*, *Mr. Will. Webb* of *Martins Iremonger Lane*, *Mr Will. Bisby* of *Laurence Jury*, *Mr. Thomas Bregstwell* } *Giles Criplegate*,
Mr. Robert Manwaring }
Mr. Laurence Brinley of *Mary Magdalins Milkstreet*.

Laurence

(5)

The seventh Classis.

Ministers.

M After *Robert Harris* of Botolph Bishopgate, Mr. *Samuel Clarke* of Bennet Fynk.

Mr. *Charles Newton*, Of Michael Basingshaw,

Mr. *Leonard Cooke*,

Others, Mr. *Christopher Pack* Alderm. of Michael Basingshaw, Mr. *James Kussell* of Stephens Colemanstreet, Master *William Williamson* of Christophers, Mr. *Robert Launt* of Peters Poore, Mr. *James Story* of Bennet Fynk, Mr. *Samuel Harsnet* of Bartholomew Exchange.

The eighth Classis.

Ministers.

M After *VVill. spurston* of Hackney, Mr. *Tho. Porter* of Katherine Creed-Church, Mr. *Elidad Blackwell* of Andrew Undershaft. Others,

Sir *David Watkins* Kt. }

Mr. *Iohn Smith* }

Of Andrew Undershaft,

Mr. *George Clarke* of Hackney, Mr. *Richard Shute* of Cree-Church, Mr. *Alex. Bence* of Algate, Mr. *Thomas Hutchins* of Hellens.

The ninth Classis.

Ministers.

M After *Thomas Clendon* of Alhollowes Barking, Mr. *Thomas Valentine* of Mary White-chappell, Mr. *Thomas Carter* of Olaves Hart-street. Others, Sir *Edward Harrington* Knight of Olives Hart-street, Mr. *Francis West* Lieutenant of the Tower, Mr. *Edmund Trench* of Alhollowes Staining, Mr. *Maurice Thompson* }

Mr. *Stafford Clare* }

East.

Mr. *Solomon Smith* of Katherine Tower.

The tenth Classis.

Ministers.

M After *Thomas Gataker* of Rotherhithe, Mr. *Jeremy Whitaker* of Mary Magdalen Bermondsey, Mr. *Samuel*

muel Bolton of Mary Overy. Others, *Mr. Collier* of Saint Saviours, *Mr. George Snelling*
Mr. Robert Haughton } of Olaves Southwarke,
Mr. George Thompson }
Mr. Daniel Sauton of Mary Overy, *Mr. Henry Helmer* of Mary Magdalen Bemondsey.

The eleventh Classis.

Ministers.

M After *Richard Vines* of Clement Danes, *Mr. Henry Cornish* of Giles in the Fields, *Mr. Camdry* of Martins in the Fields, *Mr. Gibson* of Margarets Westminster,

Mr. John Packer,

Mr. Thomas Faulconbridge }

Others, *Mr. John Brigham* }

Mr. George Pryn

Mr. Edward Martin

of Westminster.

Mr. James Prince,

Mr. Silvanus Taylor, } of Clement Danes,

Mr. Walter Bigs of Giles in the Fields, *Mr. Edward Carter* of Covent Garden.

The twelfth Classis.

Ministers.

M After *Obadiah Sedgwick* of Andrews Holborne, *Mr. Immanuel Bourne* of Sepulchres, *Mr. Strong* of Dunstons West. Others, *Mr. Roger Drake* Doctor of Physick, *Mr. William Iesop* of Andrews Holborne, *Mr. Thomas Smith*, *Mr. Nathaniel Camfield* of Sepulchres, *Mr. Francis Allen* of Dunstons West.

2 That all Exceptions objected against any persons elected to be Congregationall Elders, shall be exhibited to the Tryers above mentioned respectively, within fourteen dayes next after the said Election.

3 That

3. That the said Tryers shall have power to receive, heare, and determine, all exceptions brought into them concerning undue Elections, and to that end to call before them all such Persons so elected, and accepting such Election, and to send for such Witneses as shall be nominated unto them by such persons as shall bring in such exceptions, and shall have power to examine upon Oath, both the persons bringing in such exceptions, and the said witnesses, concerning any undue proceedings in the manner of the said Election, & concerning all matters of ignorance or scandall objected against the party elected, and expressed afterwards to be a sufficient cause of suspension from the Sacrament of the Lords Supper (and of which any Elder-ship by any Ordinance of Parliament hath Cognizance and Jurisdiction) and that shall be proved to have been committed within one whole yeare before the exceptions exhibited, and that the persons against whom the exceptions are taken shall have like liberty to produce witnesses to be examined in like manner on their behalfe.

4. That the Tryers shall have power to examine whether the Elders that are chosen be so qualified as is above expressed.

5. That in case the Election of any Elder of a congregation, upon just prooffe and examination, be found by the Tryers appointed for that purpose to be unduely made, or the person to be ignorant, or scandalous, or not qualified as aforesaid, Then the said Tryers may order such Elder to be removed, and another to be chosen in his place.

6. That in case no just exception as aforesaid shall be proved against any Elder, and that the said Elder shall approve himselfe as duely qualified for the said Office unto the Tryers, then the said Tryers shall have power to approve the person so elected to be a Congregationall Elder

in the place where he is so elected, and the person so approved is hereby authorised to act with the Minister, and the rest of the Congregationall Eldership, in the Government of that Congregation.

7. That the said Tryers have power to call before them those persons whose names shall be returned to them as chosen to be Elders in any Congregation, to know whether they are willing to accept of the said Office, and to receive further satisfaction from them concerning their fitnessse for the said Office.

8. That what shall be done by the major part of the Tryers that be present, (not being under the number of seven) in each Classis, shall be esteemed as the Act of all the Tryers of that Classis.

9. That the Committee of Lords and Commons hereafter mentioned, appointed for the judging of Scandall, have power to constitute Tryers within the Province of London, where need shall require.

*The Distribution of the Province of London into their
Classicall Elderships.*

1. **T**hat the Province of London shall be divided into twelve Classicall Elderships, according to the distributions hereafter following;

The first Classis to containe,

A Lhallowes Breadstreet, Andrew Wararop, Anne Blackfriars, Austins Parish, Bennet Pauls-Wharfe, Faiths, Gregories, Iohn Evangelist, Margaret Moses, Martin Ludgate, Mary Aldermay, Mary Le Bow, Matthew Frydaystreet, Mildreds Breadstreet, Pauls, Peters Pauls-Wharfe.

The second Classis to containe,

A Nthonies vulgo Antholins, Bennet Sherehogge, James Garlickhithe, Iohn Baptist, Martin in the Vintrey, Mary Magdalin Old Fishstreet, Mary Sommerfet, Mary Mount-hann vulgo Monnthaw, Michael Queenhithe, Michael Royall,

Royall, Nicholas old Abby, Nicholas Olaves, Pancret Soper-lane, Thomas Apostle, Trinity Parish.

The third Classis to containe.

A Lhallowes the Greater, Alhallowes the Lesse, Allhallowes Lumbarstreet, Edmunds Lumbarstreet, Laurence Pountney, Mary Abchurch, Mary Botham, Mary Woollchurch, Mary Woolnoth, Nicholas Acon, Stephens in Walbrook, Swithins.

The fourth Classis to containe.

A Ndreu Hubbert, Bennet Gracechurch, Buttolph Billingsgate, Clements in Eastcheap, Dionis Backchurch, George Buttolph-lane, Leonard in Eastcheap, Magnus, Margaret New-Fishstreet, Martin Orgars, Mary-hill, Michael Crooked Lane, Michael Cornhill, Peters Cornhill.

The fifth Classis to containe,

A Nne Aldersgate, Buttolph Aldersgate, Brides, Bride-well, Christchurch, Iohn Zacharie, Leonard Fosterlane, Mary Stainings, Michael in the Corne vulgo Querne, Olaves Silverstreet, Peter Cheape, Pedast alias Fosters.

The sixth Classis to containe,

A Lbans Woodstreet, Alhallowes Hony-Lane, Alphage, Giles Creeplegate, Iames Chappell, Laurence in the Iury, Martin in Iremonger-lane, Mary Aldermanbury, Marymand-lins Milkstreete, Mary Colechurch, Michael in Woodstreet, Mildred in the Poultry, Olives in the Iury.

The seventh Classis to containe,

A Lhallowes by the Wall, Bartholmew Exchange, Bennet Fynke, Buttolph Bishopsgate, Christophers, Margares Lothbury, Michael Basingshaw, Peter Poore, Stevens Colemanstreet.

The eighth Classis to containe,

A Ndreu Vndershaft, Buttolph Algate, Ethelburge, Hackney, Hellens, Iames Dukes place, Katherine Creechurch, Leonard Shoreditch, Martins Oteswitch vulgo Outwich, Mary

Newington alias Soke Newington.

The ninth *Classis* to containe,

A *Lhallowes Barkin, Alhallowes Stainings, Dunstons in the East, Gabriell Fenchurch, Katherin Coleman, Katherin Tower, Margaret Pattons, Olaves Hartstreet, Peters in the Tower, Stepney, Trinity Minories, Wapping, Whitechappell.*

The tenth *Classis* to containe,

G *George Southwarke, Lambeth, Mary Magdalen Bermondsey, Mary Overs, Newington Buts, Olaves Southwarke, Rotherhithe vulgo Redriffe, Thomas Hospitall, Thomas Southwarke.*

The eleventh *Classis* to containe,

C *Lements Danes, Giles in the Fields, Knightsbridge, Margarets Westminster, Martins in the Fields, Newchurch, Peters Westminster, Pauls Chappell in Covent Garden.*

The twelfth *Classis* to containe,

A *Andrew Holbourne, Bartholmew the Greater, Bartholmew the Lesse, Charterhouse, Dunstons in the West, James Carkenwell, Mary Islington, Sepulchres.*

∴ That all the severall Parishes and Places within the Cities of *London* and *Westminster*, and the parts adjacent, according as they are distinguished into Twelve severall classes, shall be the extent and bounds of the Province of *London*.

3. That the Chappell of the Rolles, the two Serjeants Innes, and the foure Innes of Court, shall be under the Presbyteriall Government of those respective classes within the limits whereof they are situate.

Concerning the Members of the Classicall and Congregationall Presbyteries in the severall Counties of the Kingdome of England, and Dominion of Wales.

1. **T**hat the Committees or Commissioners named in the Ordinance of Sixty Thousand li. *per mensem*,

Dated

Dated the 23 of *June* 1647. or any three or more of them of the severall Counties of this Kingdome, with the Assistance of such Ministers and others as they shall thinke fit, do forthwith meet, and consider how their severall Counties respectively may be most conveniently divided into distinct Classicall Presbyteries, where they are not already divided, and what Ministers and others are fit to be of each classis, and they shall accordingly make such division and nomination of Persons for each Classicall Presbytery, which divisions, and Persons so named for every division, shall be certified by the said Committees and Commissioners to the Committee of Lords and Commons for judging of scandall, And that the Chancellors, Vicechancellors, and heads of the Universities, do likewise consider how the Colleges may be put into Classicall Presbyteries, and do certifie the same up to the said Committee of Lords and Commons; And that the said Certificates be made before the 25. of *March* next, which Committee of Lords and Commons is required to approve and confirme the same as they shall thinke fit, immediately upon receipt of such Certificate.

2. That the said severall Classes respectively, being approved as aforesaid, within their severall Precincts, shall Act and execute all power belonging to any Classis, & also shall have power to constitute Congregationall Elderships, where a competent number of persons so qualified for Elders as aforesaid, shall be found; And to that end they have power to proceed in the Tryall, examination, approbation, and removall of such persons as shall be chosen Congregationall Elders, as the Tryers above mentioned are authorised to doe: And that all exceptions against any persons chosen to be Elders, shall be exhibited at the next Monethly meeting of the Classis; And where no persons shall be found fit to be Elders as aforesaid, then that Con-

gregation shall be immediately under the Classicall Presbytery, untill that Congregation shall be inabled with members fit to be Elders as aforesaid.

3. That the severall Classis constituted as aforesaid in the severall Counties, within the limits of the said respective Classis, where no Congregationall Presbyteries are already setled, shall have from time to time power to nominate such Ministers and others as are quallified according to this Ordinance, to joyne with them in the same, to be approved by the Committe of Lords and Commons appointed to judge of scandall, untill such time as Congregationall Presbyteries shall be setled in the said respective Precincts; And that such power shall be executed not only in cases of death or other departure of any Minister or Elder from the place of their wonted dwelling, but also in case of increase of Ministers, and of fit persons to be Elders in their severall Precincts.

4. That when the said Congregationall Presbyteries shall be setled within the said limits, that then the said Congregationall Presbyteries shall act according to the power and directions of this Ordinance in that behalfe.

5. That at any such time as seven Congregationall Elderships or more shall be constituted into any Classicall Precinct, in any of the Counties, by the respective Classis established as above said, the same shall by them be signified to the severall Congregationall Elderships so established, and the said Congregationall Elderships shall forthwith proceed to depute such of their Elders as are most fit, who together with their Minister shall meet as a Classis, and shall be to all intents and purposes thenceforth the Classis of that Precinct, and execute all power belonging to such or any former Classis, and the Classis formerly constituted shall cease as to that Precinct.

6. That in all such Classicall Elderships, whether in the Pro-

Province of *London*, or in any of the Counties of the Kingdome, there shall be out of every Congregationall Eldership, two Elders or more, not exceeding the number of foure, and one Minister, sent to every Classis.

7. That the Classicall Assemblies in each Provittce within the Kingdome of *England*, and Dominion of *Wales*, shall assemble themselves within one Moneth after they shall be thus constituted, and shall thenceforth hold their meetings Monethly by Adjournment, or oftner if need be, in such certaine place as shall be most convenient for the ease of the people; And that before they sit about any businesse, there be a Sermon or exposition of Scripture made by some Minister of that Classis, or expectant, as they shall agree amongst themselves.

8. That for the more orderly managing of such affaires as come before them, there be one Moderator chosen by the Classis, at every meeting, out of the Ministers of the Word, who shall continue untill the next meeting.

9. That the Classis have power to take in such Ministers as they shall think fit within their Precincts, although at the present there be no Eldership constituted in the said Congregation.

10. That in the Classicall meeting of all Classes, that which shall be done by the major part present, shall be esteemed as the A&t of the whole Classicall number, and that no A&t done by any Classis shall be valid and good, unlesse it be done by the number of twelve present, whereof foure at least to be Ministers, and eight at the least Ruling Elders, or the major part of them.

11. That the Congregationall Presbyteries shall meet once every weeke, and oftner if occasion shall require.

Concerning the Members of the Provinciaall Assemblies.

1. **T**hat the Committe of Lords and Commons have power to bound the Provinciaall Assemblies in the Kingdome of *England* and Dominion of *Wales*.
2. That the Provinciaall Assemblies shall be constituted of Members sent from every Classis within the Province.
3. That the number of the Members sent from every Classis shall be so proportioned as that the Provincial Assemblie may be more in number than any Classicall Presbyterie, and to that end, they shall be at the least two Ministers, and foure ruling Elders out of every classis, and that where there shall be need, the Committee of Lords and Commons for the adjudging of scandall, shall encrease the number of Delegates which are or shall be sent to any Provinciaall Assembly, as they shall thinke fit.
4. That the Elders of the Classis of the Province of *London* shall hold their Provinciaall Assembly in *Sion* College, as formerly they have done, and may adjourne their meeting *de die in diem*, and conclude their meeting with adjournment unto the next opportunity, as formerly they have done; and that no Act shall passe or be valid in the said Province of *London*, but what shall be done by the number of sixe and thirty present, or the Major part of them, whereof twelve to be Ministers, and foure and twenty ruling Elders; And that the first meeting of the Provinciaall Assembly in the severall Counties be appointed by the Committee of Lords and Commons aforesaid, and may adjourne as aforesaid, who are also to appoint the Quorum that shall act in each Province.
5. That the Provinciaall Assembly being constituted shall meet twice every yeare, or oftner if occasion shall require.

Concerning

Concerning the Nationall Assembly.

1. **T**HE Nationall Assembly shall be constituted of Members chosen by, and sent from, the severall Provinciall Assemblies aforesaid; the number of the Members from each Province to the Nationall Assemblie shall be two Ministers, foure Ruling Elders, and five Learned and Godly persons from each Univerfity.

2. The Nationall Assemblie shall meete when they shall be summoned by Parliament, and to sit and continue as the Parliament shall Order, and not otherwise.

Of the Subordination of these Assemblies.

1. **T**HAT there be a Subordination of Congregationall, Clafficall, Provinciall and Nationall Assemblies, for the Governement of the Church, that so Appeales may be made from the Inferiour to the Superiour respectively.

2. That in all Cases of Appeale to the Clafficall, Provinciall, or Nationall Assemblie, they shall have power respectively to proceede thereupon by examination of Witnesses, and otherwise, in such manner as the Congregationall Eldership, from which the Appeale ariseth, are enabled to doe by this Ordinance of Parliament, and shall certifie such their proceedings to the said Eldership.

3. That the Provinciall and Nationall Assemblies have the same power in all points of Governement and Censures brought before them, within their severall bounds respectively, as doth belong to Clafficall Presbyteries within their severall Associations.

4. That if any person shall finde himselfe grieved with the proceedings against him before the Eldership of any Congregation, hee shall have liberty to appeale to the

Classicall Eldership, and from thence to the Provinciaall Assemblie, and from thence to the Nationall, and from thence to the Parliament.

Of the power in Common of all these Assemblies, and the Order to bee observed in them.

1. **T**hat the severall Assemblies before mentioned may convent and call before them any person within their severall bounds whom the Ecclesiasticall businesse that is before them shall concerne, either as a partie, or as a Witnesse, according to the nature of the Businesse: And that they doe heare and determine such causes and differences as shall orderly come before them, and accordingly dispenche Church Censures.

2. That these severall Assemblies, or the Major part of them respectively, shall have power by warrant under their hands (in all cases whereof they have any Cognizance by this Ordinance) to convent before them all persons against whom any Complaint shall bee brought, by vertue of this Ordinance, and all such witnesses as shall be named for the Discovery of the Truth of such complaint: And in case any person shall refuse to appeare, Then upon complaint made to the next Justice of the Peace, the party refusing shall bee brought before him, and in case of obstinate persisting, shall bee committed by the sayd Justice of the Peace till hee submit unto Order.

3. That in these meetings of the severall Assemblies, one whole Office is to labour in the Word and Doctrine, do moderate in their proceedings, who is to Vote as well as the rest of the Members, to begin and end the meeting with Prayer, to propose questions, gather the Votes, pronounce the Resolves; but not to do any act of Govern-

Government, unlesse in and joyntly with the Assembly whereof he is Moderator.

4. That all the Members of these Assemblies respectively, are to attend on the appointed dayes of their meetings, or to send the reasons of their absence to bee judged by the Assembly where they are to meete.

*The power of Congregationall Elderships or Assemblies
for Governing of a particular
Congregation.*

1. **T**hat the Congregationall Eldership, consisting of the Minister or Ministers, and the other ruling Officers of that Congregation, shall have power, as they shall see just occasion, to inquire into the knowledge and spirituall estate of any Member of the Congregation, to admonish and rebuke, to suspend from the Lords Table those who are found by them to bee ignorant, and scandalous, and to Excommunicate according to the rules and directions hereafter following.

2. That where there are many ruling Officers in a Particular Congregation, some of them doe more especially attend the Inspection of one part, some of another, as may bee most convenient, and some of them are at fit times to visite the severall Families for their spirituall good.

3. That the Number of Elders in each Congregation bee proportioned according to the condition of the Congregation, and the exercise of their Office is so to be Ordered by the Eldership, as that their civill employment may be least hindred thereby.

The power of Classicall Assemblies.

1. **T**Hat Classicall Presbyteries, which are Assemblies made up of Ministers of the Word, and other ruling Officers belonging unto severall neighbouring Congregations, shall have power to consider, debate, and resolve, according to Gods VVord, such cases of conscience, or other difficulties in Doctrine, as are brought unto them out of their Association, according as they shall find needfull for the good of the Churches.

2. To examine and censure, according to the VVord, any erroneous Doctrine, which hath beene vented within their Association to the corrupting of the judgement of men ; And to endeavour the converting and reducing of Recusants, or any other in Errour or Schisme.

3. To take Cognizance of causes omitted or neglected in the Eldership of Particular Congregations, and to receive appeales from them.

4. To dispence Censures in cases within their Cognizance, by Admonition, Suspension, or Excommunication.

5. To admonish, or further to censure, scandallous Ministers, whether in life or Doctrine, according to the nature of the offence, and that not onely for such offences for which any other Member of the Congregation shall incurre any censure of the Church, (in which case hee is to be censured by the Classis with the like censure, for the like offence) but likewise particularly for Simony, entering into any Ministeriall charge without allowance of Authority, false Doctrine, affected lightnesse, and vanity in Preaching, wilfull neglect of Preaching, or slight performance of it, wilfull non-Residence from his charge

charge without call or cause approved by the Classis, neglect of Administration of the Sacrament, or other Ministeriall duties required of him in the Directory of worship, depraving and speaking reproachfully against the wholesome Orders by Authority settled in the Church, casting reproach upon the power of godlinesse, which hee by his Office ought chiefly to promote, yet so as that no Minister be deprived or degraded, but by the resolution of a Synod.

6. To examine, Ordaine, and Admit Ministers for the Congregations respectively therein Associated, according to the Orders and directions hereafter following.

The Ordination of Ministers.

VWhereas the word Presbyter, that is to say, Elder, and the word Bishop, doe in the Holy Scripture intend and signifie one and the same function, although the Title of Bishop hath beene by corrupt Custome appropriated to One, and that unto him ascribed, and by him assumed, as in other things, so in the matter of Ordination, that was not meete; which Ordination notwithstanding being performed by him, a Presbyter joyned with other Presbyters, wee hold for substance to be valid, and not to bee disclaimed by any that have received it; And that Presbyters so Ordained, being lawfully thereunto appointed and Authorized, may Ordaine other Presbyters. And whereas also it is manifest by the Word of God, that no man ought to take upon him the Office of a Minister untill hee be lawfully called and Ordained thereunto; and that the worke of Ordination, that is to say an outward solemne setting apart of persons for the

Office of the Ministrie in the Church by the Preaching Presbyters, is an Ordinance of Christ, and is to be performed with all due care, wisdom, gravity, and solemnity; It is Ordained by the Lords and Commons assembled in Parliament, and by the Authority of the same, (after advice had with the Assembly of Divines now convened at *Westminster*,) That the severall and respective Classicall Presbyters within their severall and respective bounds, may and shall examine, approve, and ordaine Presbyters, according to the Directory for Ordination, and rules for Examination, hereafter expressed, that is to say;

First, hee that is to be Ordained, must addresse himselfe to the Presbytery, and bring with him a Testimoniaall of his taking the Covenant of the Three Kingdomes, of his dilligence and proficiency in his studies, what Degrees hee hath taken in the Vniversity, and what hath bene the time of his abode there, and withall of his Age, which is to be foure and twenty yeares at least; but especially of his life and conversation.

Secondly, the Presbytery shall proceede to enquire touching the Grace of God in him, and whether hee be of such holinesse of life as is requisite in a Minister of the Gospell, and to examine him touching his learning and sufficiency, and touching the evidence of his calling to the holy Ministry, and in particular, his faire and direct calling to that place to which hee is designed.

The Rules for Examination are these.

1. **T**hat the party to be examined be dealt with in a brotherly way, with mildnesse of spirit, and with speciall respect to the gravity, modesty, and quality of every one.

2. Hee shall bee examined touching his skill in the Originall Tongues ; and that tryall to be made by reading the Hebrew and Greeke Testaments, and rendring some portions of them into Latine ; Inquiry also shall be made of his knowledge and skill in Logick, Philosophy, and other learning.

3. It shall bee inquired what Authors in Divinity hee hath read, and is best acquainted with, and whether hee hath read and observed the Ecclesiasticall History, and what his skill is in the Chronology of the Holy Scripture.

4. Tryall shall bee made of his knowledge in the chiefe grounds of Religion, and of his ability to defend the Orthodox Doctrine contained in them, against all unsound and erroneous opinions, especially those of the present Age ; Also of his skill in the sense and meaning of such places of Scripture as shall bee proposed to him, also his judgement in cases of conscience.

5. If hee hath not before preached in publicke, with approbation of such who have ability to judge, hee shall at a competent time assigned him, and before the Presbytery, preach a Sermon upon such a place of Scripture as shall be given him.

6. Hee shall in a competent time also frame a discourse in Latine, upon such a common place or controverse in Divinity as shall be assigned him, and exhibite

to the Presbytery such Theses as expresse the summe thereof, and maintaine a dispute upon them; also hee shall preach before the people, the Presbytery, or some of the Ministers of the Word appointed by them, being present.

7. The proportion of his Gifts, in relation to the place unto which hee is called, shall bee considered.

8. Besides the tryall of his Gifts in preaching, hee shall undergoe an Examination in the premises two severall dayes or more, if the Presbytery shall judge it necessary.

Thirdly, after which hee being approved, is to bee sent to the Church, or other place, where hee is to serve, if it may bee done with safety and conveniency, there to Preach Three severall dayes, and to converse with the People, that they may have tryall of his Gifts for their edification, and may have time and leasure to inquire into, and the better to know, his life and conversation.

Fourthly, in the last of these three dayes appointed for the making knowne of his Gifts in Preaching, there shall bee sent from the Presbytery to the Congregation a publique instrument in writing, which shall publicquely bee read before the people, and after affixed to the Church-Doore, to signifie such a day any member or members of the said Congregation, or any other person or persons whatsoever, or any of them, may put in, with all Christian discretion and meekenesse, what exceptions they have against Him, and if upon the day appointed there bee no just exceptions against Him, the Presbytery shall proceede to Ordination.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, upon the day appointed for Ordination, which is to be performed in that Church where he that is to be ordained is to serve (if it may be done with safety and conveniency) a solempne Fast shall be kept by the Congregation, that they may more earnestly joyne in prayer to God for a blessing upon the person and labour of this his servant solemnly to be set apart to the Office of the Ministry for their good; the Presbytery shall come to the place, or some Ministers of the Word, five at the least, shall be sent from the Presbytery, whereof one shall preach to the People concerning the Office and duty of the Ministers of Christ, and how the people ought to esteeme him for the work sake.

Sixthly, after the Sermon ended, the Minister which hath preached shall, in the face of the Congregation, demand of him who is now to be ordained, concerning his faith in Christ Jesus, & his perswasion of the truth of the reformed Religion according to the Scriptures; his sincere intentions and ends in desiring to enter into this calling; his resolution to use constant diligence in Prayer, Reading, Meditation, Preaching, ministering the Sacraments, and doing all Ministeriall duties towards his charge with his whole desire, as in the presence of God, so as may most further their edification and salvation; his zeale and faithfulness in maintaining the truth of the Gospell, and purity of the Church against Errour and Schisme; his care that himselfe and family may be unblameable, and examples to the flock, and his full purpose to continue in his duty against all trouble and persecution.

Seventhly, in all which having declared himselfe, professed his willingness, and promised his endea-

vours by the help of God, the Presbytery, or Ministers sent from them, shall solemnly set him apart to the Office and worke of the Ministry, laying their hands on him, with a short prayer or blessing, to this effect:

*Thankfully acknowledging the great mercy of God in sending of Jesus Christ for the redemption of his people, and for his ascension to the right hand of God the Father, and there pouring out his Spirit, and giving gifts to Men, Apostles, Evangelists, Prophets, Pastors, and Teachers, for the gathering and building up of his Church, and for fitting and inclining this man to this great worke; to beseech him to fill him with his holy Spirit, whom in his Name we * set apart to this holy service, to fulfill the worke of his Ministry in all things, that he may both save himselfe, and the people committed to his charge.*

* Here let
them im-
pose their
hands upon
his head.

Eightly, this or the like forme of prayer or blessing being ended, let the Minister who preached, briefly exhort him to consider, the greatnesse of his Office and worke, the danger of negligence both to himselfe and his people, the blessing which will accompany his faithfulness in this life and that to come; withall let him exhort the people, and charge them in the name of God, willingly to receive and acknowledge him as the Minister of Christ, and to maintaine, incourage and assist him in all the parts of his Office, and so by prayer commending both him and his flock to the grace of God, after the singing of a Psalm, let the Assembly be dismissed with a blessing.

Ninthly, let such as are or shall be chosen or appointed

ted for the service of Army, Navy, Colleges, or other charge, be ordained as aforesaid, in such Church as the Classicall Presbytery to which they shall addresse themselves shall think fit, and such alterations made by the Minister that ordaineth, from the exhortation last before prescribed, as the circumstance of place and person shall require.

Tenthly, let every one which is or shall be chosen or appointed for any place or congregation, not being at that time within the bounds of any Classicall Presbytery, be ordained by that Classis of Presbyters which he shall addresse himselfe unto, or by five, or any greater number of Ministers of the Word, to be sent from that Presbytery; which Ordination is to be performed according to the rules and directions before prescribed, as farre as with safety and conveniency may be.

And be it further Ordained by the said Lords and Commons, and by the authority aforesaid, that every person formerly ordained a Presbyter, according to the forme of Ordination which hath been held in the Church of *England*, and is to be removed to another charge, do bring to the Presbytery where he is to be placed, if there be any, and if not, then to some other Presbytery, a testimoniall of his ordination, and of his abilities and conversation, whereupon his fitnessse for that place to which he is to be removed shall be tried by his preaching there, and (if it shall be judged necessary) by a further examination, and so without any new ordination he shall be admitted, if he be approved, as fit for that place; And if any person ordained Minister in *Scotland*, or in any other reformed Church, be designed to a Congregation in *England*, he is to bring

from that Church to the Presbytery where he is to be placed, if there be any, & if not then to some other Presbytery, a sufficient testimoniall of his ordination, of his life and conversation while he lived with them, and of the causes of his removall, and to undergoe such a triall of his fitnesse and sufficiency, and to have the same course held with him in other particulars, as is set down in the foregoing rule, and provision, touching the examination and admission of persons formerly ordained in *England*.

And it is further Ordained, that records be carefully kept by the Register to be nominated by the Presbytery, of the names of the persons ordained, with their Testimonials, of the time and place of their ordination, and of the Ministers who did ordaine them, and of the Charge to which they are appointed; and that no money or gift of what kinde soever shall be received from the person to be ordained, or from any on his behalfe, for ordination, or ought else belonging to it, by the Presbytery, or any of them, or any appertaining to any of them, upon what pretence soever, except to the Register for the entry, instruments, and testimoniall of his ordination, which shall not exceed the summe of ten shillings for each person ordained.

And it is yet further Ordained by the authority aforesaid, that all persons who shall be ordained Presbyters according to this Directory, shall be for ever reputed and taken, to all intents and purposes, for lawfull and sufficiently authorized Ministers of the Church of *England*, and as capable of any Ministeriall imployment in the Church, with the rights and profits belonging thereunto, as any other Presbyters whatsoever already ordained or hereafter to be ordained; And that all Presbyters

byters, who are hereby appointed and authorized to ordaine, and shall (according to this present Directory) ordaine any one or more Presbyters, are hereby declared to perform an acceptable service to this Church and Kingdome, and shall have the protection of both houses of Parliament for their indemnity : And what Presbytery soever, being in due manner desired, shall without just and true cause, refuse, or deferre to ordain any Presbyter, whom by the Rules and direction of this Ordinance they ought to ordaine, or shall omit, or neglect, to observe the solemnity of ordination, in that decent, and grave, and Godly manner as is meet, It is hereby declared, That they are guilty of a very great offence, and deserve severe punishment.

The Power of Synodical Assemblies.

1. **T**hat Synodical Assemblies, whether Provinciall or Nationall, consisting of Pastors, Teachers, Church-governours, and other fit persons (when it shall be deemed expedient) where they have a lawfull calling thereunto, have Ecclesiasticall power and authority to judge and determine controversies of faith, and cases of conscience according to the word.

2. They may also excommunicate, and dispencc other Church-censures, in cases that are orderly brought before them.

*Of Church Censures, and first of Suspension
from the Sacrament.*

1. **T**hat the severall Elderships respectively, within their respective bounds and limits, have power to suspend

suspend from the Sacrament of the Lords Supper all Ignorant and scandalous persons, within the Rules hereafter following; and according to the said Rules and directions.

*Rules and Directions, concerning Suspension from
the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, in
Cases of Ignorance.*

1. **A**ll such persons, who shall be admitted to the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, ought to know That there is a God; that there is but one everliving and true God, maker of heaven and earth, and Governour of all things; that this onely true God is the God whom we worship; that this God is but one God, yet three distinct persons, the Father, Sonne, and holy Ghost, all equally God.

That God created man after his own Image, in knowledge, righteousnesse and true holinesse; that by one man sinne entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned; that thereby they are all dead in trespasses and sins, and are by nature the Children of wrath, and so lyable to eternall death, the wages of every sin:

That there is but one Mediator betwixt God and Man, the man Christ Jesus, who is also over all God blessed for ever, neither is there salvation in any other.

That he was conceived by the holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin *Mary*, that he dyed upon the Crosse to save his people from their sinnes, that he rose againe the third day from the dead, ascended into heaven, sits at
the

the right hand of God, and makes continuall intercession for us, of whose fulnesse we receive all Grace necessary to Salvation.

That Christ and his benefits are applyed onely by faith; that faith is the gift of God, and that we have it, not of our selves, but it is wrought in us by the word and spirit of God.

That faith is that Grace, whereby we beleeve and trust in Christ for remission of sins and life everlasting, according to the promises of the Gospell; that whosoever believes not on the sonne of God, shall not see life, but shall perish eternally.

That they who truly repent of their sins do see them, sorrow for them, and turn from them to the Lord; and that except men repent, they shall surely perish.

That a Godly life is conscionably ordered according to the word of God, in holinesse and righteounesse, without which no man shall see God.

That the Sacraments are seales of the Covenant of Grace in the blood of Christ; that the Sacraments of the new Testament are Baptisme and the Lords Supper; That the outward Elements in the Lords Supper are bread and wine, and doe signifie the body and blood of Christ crucified; which the worthy receiver by faith doth partake of in this Sacrament, which Christ hath likewise ordained for the remembrance of his death; that whosoever eats and drinks unworthily, is guilty of the body and blood of the Lord, and therefore that every one is to examine himselfe, lest he eat and drinke Judgement to himselfe, not discerning the Lords body.

That the soules of the faithfull after death doe immediately live with Christ in blessednesse; and that the
soules

soules of the wicked do immediately goe into hell Torment ; that there shall be a resurrection of the bodies, both of the just and unjust at the last day, at which time all shall appear before the judgement seat of Christ, to receive according to what they have done in the body, whether it be good or evill, and that the righteous shall go into life eternall, and the wicked into everlasting punishment

2. Those who have a competent measure of understanding, concerning the matters contained in these Articles, shall not be kept back from the Sacrament of the Lords Supper for Ignorance ; and the examination and judgement of such persons, as shall for their Ignorance of the aforesaid points of Religion not be admitted to the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, is to be in the power of the Eldership of every Congregation.

*Rules and Directions, concerning Suspension from the
Sacrament of the Lords Supper, in Cases
of Scandall.*

1. **T**hat the severall and respective Elderships, shall have power to suspend from the Sacrament of the Lords Supper all scandalous persons hereafter mentioned, appearing to be such upon just proof made thereof in such manner as by this present Ordinance is hereafter appointed, that is to say, all persons that shall blasphemously speake or write any thing of God, his holy word or Sacraments, all renouncers of the true protestant Religion professed in the Church of England;
And

And all persons that shall by Preaching or Writing maintain any such Errors as do subvert any of those Articles, the ignorance whereof doth render any person excluded from the Sacrament of the Lords Supper; An Incestuous person, an Adulterer, a Fornicator, a Drunkard, a prophane Swearer or curser; One that hath taken away the Life of any person maliciously; All Worshippers of Images, Crosses, Crucifixes, or Reliques; All that shall make any Images or Pictures of the Trinity, or of any person thereof; All religious Worshippers of Saints, Angels, or any meer creatures; Any person that shall profess himself not to be in charity with his Neighbors; all persons in whom Malice appears, and they refuse to be reconciled; any person that shall challenge any other person by word, message or writing, to Fight, or that shall accept such Challenge, and agree thereto; Any person that shall knowingly carry any Challenge by word, message or writing; Any person that shall upon the Lords day use any Dancing, Playing at Dice, or Cards, or any other Game, Masquing, Wakes, Shooting, Bowling, Playing, playing at Foot-ball, Stool-ball, Wrestling, or that shall make or resort unto any Plays, Interludes, Fencing, Bull-baiting, or Bear-baiting, or that shall use Hawking, Hunting or coursing, Fishing or Fowling, or that shall publicly expose any Wares to sale, otherwise then is provided by an Ordinance of Parliament of the Sixth of *April*, 1644. Any person that shall Travel on the Lords day without reasonable cause; Any person that keepeth a known Stews or Brothel-house, or that shall solícite the chastity of any person for himself or any other; Any person, Father or Mother, that shall consent to the Marriage of their childe to a Papist, or any person that shall marry a Papist; Any person that shall repair for any Advice to any Witch, Wizard, or Fortune-teller;

teller; Any person that shall menace or assault his parents, or any Magistrate, Minister, or Elder in the execution of his Office; Any person that shall be Legally attainted of Barratry, Forgery, Extortion or Bribery.

II. That the Eldership of every Congregation shall have power to examine any person complained of for any matter of Scandal aforesaid; And upon confession of the party before the Eldership to have committed such an Offence, to Suspend any such person from the Sacrament of the Lords Supper; and the Eldership of every Congregation shall examine upon Oath such Witnesses as shall be produced before them, either for the acquitting or condemning of the party accused of any of the said Scandalous crimes aforesaid not capital; And the Eldership of every Congregation shall judge the matter of Scandal aforesaid being not capital, upon the Testimony of Two credible Witnesses at the least.

III. That the severall and respective Elderships, in their severall and respective proceedings shall observe these ensuing Cautions:

1. That Cognizance and Examination of any capital Offence shall be by the Magistrate thereunto appointed by the Law of the Kingdom, who, if he shall commit the party questioned to prison, or secure him or her by Bail, he shall thereof make Certificate unto the Eldership of the Congregation where he or she did last reside, or to any other Eldership, who shall thereupon have power to Suspend the party from the Sacrament of the Lords Supper.

2. The Presbytery or Eldership shall not have cognizance of any thing wherein any matter of Payment, Contract or Demand is concerned, or of any matter of Conveyance, Title, Interest or Property in Lands or Goods.

3. No

3. No use shall be made of any Confession or proof made before the Eldership at any Tryal at Law, of any person for any offence.

4. That if any person shall commit any scandalous offence (not enumerated in this Ordinance) upon the day of the Administration of the Sacrament of the Lords-Supper in the face of the Congregation after it is assembled, The Minister of that Congregation shall forbear to administer the Sacrament to such a person for that time; and he shall forthwith certify the said offence and forbearance unto the Committee of Lords and Commons hereafter mentioned: and upon certificate so made, the said Committee shall proceed thereupon, as in other cases not enumerated.

5. That if any member of a Congregation shall by vertue of this Ordinance of Parliament, either for Ignorance, or for any offence of Scandal, be suspended from the Sacrament of the Lords-Supper, and being so suspended, shall offer himself to any other Congregation to receive the Sacrament of the Lords Supper together with them, the Ministers and Elders of such Congregation, having notice of such suspension, shall not without certificate from the Congregation whereof he is a member, that his suspension is taken off, admit him unto the Sacrament.

6. That any Minister of a Congregation may be suspended from giving or receiving; and any Elder from receiving the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, for the same causes, and in the same maner, and have the like benefit of Appeal, as any other person may by this Ordinance: And after such suspension of the Elder from the Sacrament, the Elder so suspended shall not execute that Office during his suspension, until the Appeal be determined; and if upon Appeal that suspension appear to

have been just, then another to be chosen in his place.

7. That in case of such suspension of any Minister, the Classis whereunto the said Congregation doth belong, shall appoint some fit person or persons for the supply of that place, during such suspension, and shall have power to allow convenient maintenance for that end, out of the profits belonging to the Minister so suspended; and have hereby power to Sequester and imploy the same for that purpose.

8 That in all cases of suspension of any person from the Sacrament, the party suspended (upon manifestation of his or her Repentance before the Eldership by whom the party was suspended) shall be admitted again unto the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, and the suspension thenceforth shall be void.

And because the Lords and Commons in Parliament assembled having it always in their purpose and intention, and it being accordingly Declared and Resolved, That all sorts of notorious scandalous Offenders shal be suspended from the Sacrament, Be it Ordained, That *Algernon* Earl of *Northumberland*, *Henry* E: of *Kent*, *John* E: of *Rutland*, *Philip* Earl of *Pembroke* and *Montgomery*, *Theophilus* E: of *Lincoln*, *Charls* Earl of *Noringham*, *James* Earl of *Suffolk*, *William* Earl of *Salisbury*, *John* Earl of *Bridgewater*, *Robert* Earl of *Warwick*, *Bazil* Earl of *Denbigh*, *James* Earl of *Middlesex*, *Edward* Earl of *Manchester*, *Edmund* Earl of *Mulgrave*, *Henry* Earl of *Stamford*, *Walter* Viscount *Hereford*, *William* Lord Viscount *Say and Seal*, *George* Lord *Berkley*, *Francis* Lord *Dacres*, *Philip* Lord *Wharten*, *Charls* Lord *de la Ware*, *Dudley* Lord *North*, *John* Lord *Hansdon*, *Charls* Lord *Stankope*, *Edward* Lord *Mountague*, *William* Lord *Grey* of *Wark*, *John* Lord *Roberts*, *William* Lord *Maynard*, *Edward* Lord *Howard* of *Escrich*, *Thomas* Lord *Bruce*.

Francis Reus, *Edmund* Prideaux Esq; Sir *Henry* Vane Senior,

Senior, *John Glyn* Esq; Recorder of London, *Sir Robert Harley*, *Bulstrode Whitlock*, *Humphrey Salaway*, Esqs; *John Wilde* Sergeant at Law, *Oliver St. Johns* Esq; His Majesties Solicitor, *Sir Benjamin Rudyard* Knight, *Mr. Tate*, *Sir John Clotworthy* Knight, *John Maynard* Esq; *Sir Henry Vane* Junior Knight, *William Pierrepont*, *William Wheeler*, Esqs; *Sir William Masham*, *Walter Yong*, *Sir John Evelyn* Knight, *John Selden*, *Samuel Brown*, Esqs; *Sir William Strickland*, *Walter Long*, *Herbert Morley*, *George Snelling*, Esqs; *Sir Harbottle Grimston* Baronet, *John Boyse*, *Richard Shuttleworth*, Esqs; *Sir John Danvers*, *John Crew* Esq; *Sir Anthony Irby*, *Sir John Holland*, *Luke Robinson*, *Thomas Westrom*, *Denzil Hollis*, *Henry Lucas*, Esqs; *Sir John Dreydon*, *Robert Reynolds* Esq; *Sir Thomas Middleton*, *Robert Fennor*, *Henry Oxenden* Esqs; *Sir Gilbert Gerrard*, *Sir John Burgoyne*, *Sir Edward Ayscough*, *John Snyfens* Esq; *Sir Henry Heyman*, *Edward Leigh* Esq; *Sir Thomas Wroth*, *Samuel Got* Esq; *Sir John Bamfield*, *John Palmer* Doctor of Physick, *Laurence Whitacre* Esq; *Sir Arthur Hesilrige*, *Sir Dudley North*, *Sir William Waller*, *Nathanael Bacon*, *Richard Edwards*, *Luke Hodges*, Esqs; *Sir William Lewis*, *Francis Allen*, *Giles Green*, *John Gourdon*, *Denis Bond*, Esqs; *Sir Peter Wenworth*, *Sir Samuel Luke*, *Edward Bainton* Esq; *Richard Salaway* Junior, *Simon Theloal*, *Oliver Cromwel*, Esqs; *Isaac Penington* Esq; Alderman of the City of London, *John Ven* Esq; *John Bond* Doctor of Law, *Sir Richard Onslow*, *Sir William Armin*, *William Ayscough*, *George Abbot*, *Cornelius Holland*, *John Blakiston*, Esqs; Lord *Herbert*, *Sir Walter Erle*, *Henry Marten* Esq; *Sir Thomas Dacres*, *Richard Brown*, *William Ellis*, *John Lisle*, *William Ashurst*, Esqs; *Sir John Trevor*, *Sir Nathanael Barnardiston*, *Thomas Lord Wenman*, *Sir Martin Lumley*, *Samuel Vase*, *Iervis Pigot*, *John Hutchinson*, *Thomas Hatcher*, *James Fiennes*, *Valentine Walton*, *John Stephens*, Esqs; *Sir John Evelyn* of Surrey, *Thomas Scot*, *Thomas*

mas Pury, Henry Peck, Thomas Hedges of Gloucestershire, Will: Leman, Richard Winwood, Iohn Lowry, Esqs; Sir Martin Lister, Sir Edmund Fowel, Robert Wallop, Richard Whitehead, Nathanael Hallows, Robert Brewster, Esqs; Sir Edward Hungerford, Richard Norton Esq; Sir Thomas Barnardiston, Sir Thomas Trenchard, Miles Corbet Esq; Sir Henry Mildmay, Thomas Atkins Esq; Alderman of the City of London, Charls Lord Cranborn, Roger Hill Esq; Sir Iohn Barrington, Iohn Trenchard Esq; Sir Iohn Corbet, Alexander Popham Esq; Sir Iohn Cook, Iohn Nut, Ralph Aften, Richard Barwis, William Armyn, Richard Tolson, Esqs; Sir Henry Cholmley, Sir Thomas Widdrington, George Fenwick, Edmund Ludlow, Lillybone Long, Francis Drake, Esqs; Sir Michael Livesey, Edward Stephens Esq; Six William Spring, Iames Herbert, Henry Laurence, Iohn Roll, Thomas Sandys, Esqs; Sir Thomas Malyvaret, Sir William Litton, Nathanael Fiennes, Wil: Purefoy, Esqs; Sir Ioh: Palgrave, Sir Iohn Pots, Ioh: Doddridge, Ioh: Nelthorp, Richard Rose, Will: Priestley, Tho: Grove, Esqs; or any Nine of them, shall be a Committee of Lords and Commons to Adjudge and Determine Scandalous Offences not formerly enumerated; And the Elderships shall proceed in the Examinations of such Scandalous Offences, according to the Cautions and Restrictions mentioned herein, and the said Committee shall have such power, and shall proceed in such sort, as is hereafter mentioned.

If any Notorious and Scandalous Offence not formerly enumerated, be committed by any within any Eldership, and so after full proof shall be found before the Eldership, who shall have power to examine Proofs and Witnesses on both sides, in case both the Elderships and the party complained of do agree the Proofs and Examinations to be duly taken, the said Eldership shall forthwith certifie the said Offence, with the Proofs, to the
said

said Committee of Parliament, who shall with all convenient speed Determine and Adjudge the same: But in case the party accused shall finde himself grieved, either by the not Examination or undue Examination of Witnesses, or mis-entring of the Depositions; in such case he shall forthwith Declare the same to the Eldership, who shall relieve him if there be cause; which if they shall not do, then the Three Justices of Peace next to the Parish whereof the party complained of is a member, or any two of them not being of the same Eldership before whom the complaint lies, shall have power, and are hereby enabled and required, forthwith to examine upon Oath the said Witnesses that were not examined or were mis-examined, or whose Depositions were mis-entred, and with all convenient speed return the Examination to the said Committee of Parliament: And in case the said Justices or any two of them do not finish their Examination within six days after the cause shall be presented unto them, the party shall abstain until they have finished and certified their Examinations; And the said Committee, upon hearing the whole matter from the Eldership and Justices, or either of them, shall Adjudge whether the same be a Notorious and Scandalous Offence, and so proved or no; in case the said Committee shall not Adjudge and Determine the case within Fourteen days after the receipt of the Certificate to them made, the party against whom the said Certificate shall be made, shall abstain from the Sacrament until the Committee shall Determine the same, unless in the mean time the party shall shew his Repentance for the said Offence, and thereof give satisfaction to the Eldership. And if the said Committee shall Adjudge the same not to be a Scandalous Offence, or not well proved, the said party shall be admitted to the Sacrament; and if they shall Adjudge the same to be a Scandalous Offence

Offence and so proved, he shall not be admitted to the Sacrament until he shall have testified his Repentance to the Eldership.

And be it further Ordained, That the Eldership shall either give personal notice to the party complained of before them, or else leave notice in writing at his dwelling place, of the time and place, when and where they will examine Witnesses against him, and also of the time that they will make their Certificate to the Committee of Parliament; and in case Information shall be given to the Eldership, of a Notorious and Scandalous Offence committed by any within their Eldership, they shall forthwith proceed to the Examination thereof; and if they cannot finish their Examination till the week before the Sacrament, and they shall then finde by sufficient proof that he hath committed a Notorious and Scandalous Offence, and yet they cannot certifie the same before the Sacrament, it being to be administred within a week after; in such case the party shall abstain from the Sacrament for the next time only, unless the Committee of Parliament, to whom the same is to be certified, shall Adjudge the same a Notorious and Scandalous Offence, and so proved; for which he ought to be kept from the Sacrament; and in such case, upon the testifying of his Repentance to the Eldership, he shall be again restored to the Sacrament, and not before.

And be it further Ordained, If any shall finde themselves agrieved with the Judgement against him given by the said Committee, they shall appeal from thence to both Houses of Parliament, if they see cause.

And be it Ordained, That the Committee to whom the said Certificate shall be made as aforesaid, shall Report to both Houses the said several cases to them certified, and their Judgements thereupon, that so the Offences not yet

yet enumerated, may be added to the enumeration, in case the Houses shall so think fit; And in their Reports they shall take care, That they first Report those Certificates, and their Opinions thereupon, wherein they at any time shall differ from the Eldership.

Be it further Ordained, That these Rules and Instructions following be carefully observed by the respective Elderships, in the dispensing of this Censure of Suspension from the Sacrament of the Lords Supper.

1. That none be suspended from the Sacrament before Admonition, unless the commission of the sin, or the information thereof to the Elders, be so immediately before the time of the Administration of the Sacrament, that there be no space for Admonition.

2. That Offences which are private be not brought unto the Eldership, unless the Offendor be privately admonished, and is not amended by such private admonition.

3. That in all cases, the Eldership specially labour to convince the person offending, of the sinfulness of that which is proved against him; and then of the aggravations, as they shall be needful.

4. That if they shall see cause to judge after the pressing of it upon his conscience, that he yet remains unconvinced that it is a sin, and therefore doth not express any Repentance for it, but not out of stubbornness and Obstinacy, then they are not to suspend him from the Sacrament, until further endeavors have been used to convince him, unless it appear that his Admission would be scandalous to the Congregation.

5. That in lesser Offences brought before the Eldership, they proceed with special Lenity, as in greater with special Zeal, and so accordingly be more slow or quick in censuring those that are found guilty, and more facile

or wary in admitting expressions of Repentance.

6. That if upon Admonition the Offender shall give evidence of his Repentance, so as the Elders shall be satisfied, and the parties offended can justly except nothing against it, let him not be kept from the Sacrament; but if he Repent not, but remain obstinate, let him be suspended from the Sacrament, according to the Directions beforementioned.

7. That if any man accuse another for a Scandalous Crime unjustly, the Eldership shall not onely clear the wronged person, but take care, that the Accuser may make such acknowledgement as the Eldership shall advise, according to the nature of the fact.

8. That in all Offences brought before the Eldership, they are to be careful to keep the matter as secret as they can, even though they be forced to proceed to Suspension, and not to make it more publique then the nature of the fact, and the impenitency of the person doth constrain them.

9. In case any should be Censured in the particular Congregation whereof he is a member, he may presently Appeal to the Classial Presbytery, or further if it be requisite, where not onely himself may be cleared and righted, but such as have done the injury may be Censured, yet *pendente lite* let him abstain from the Sacrament.

*Of Excommunication, and the course of proceedings therein;
The order of proceeding with Offenders, who before Ex-
communication manifest Repentance.*

I. **V**When the Offence is private, private Admonition is in all wisdom and love to be observed, that the offender may either be recovered by Repentance,
or

or if he adde obstinacy or contempt to his fault, he may be cut off by Excommunication.

2. If the sin be publicly Scandalous, and the sinner being examined be judged to have signs of unfeigned Repentance, and nothing justly objected against it when made known unto the people, let him be admitted to publique Confession of his sin, and manifestation of his Repentance before the Congregation.

3. When the penitent is brought before the Congregation, the Minister is to declare his sin, whereby he hath provoked Gods wrath, and offended his people, his Confession of it, and profession of unfeigned Repentance for it, and of his Resolution (through the strength of Christ) to sin no more; and his desire of their Prayers for Mercy and Grace to be kept from falling again into that or any the like sin; of all which the penitent is to make a full and free expression according to his ability.

4. Which being done, the Minister after Prayer to God for the penitent, is to admonish him to walk circumspectly, and the people to make a right use of his fall and rising again, and so to declare that the Congregation resteth satisfied.

The order of proceeding to Excommunication.

1. **E**Xcommunication being a shutting out of a person from the Communion of the Church (and therefore the greatest and last Censure of the Church) let it be inflicted with great and mature deliberation, and after all other good means have been assayed.

2. That such errors as subvert the Faith, or any other errors which overthrow the power of Godliness, if the party who holds them, spread them, seeking to draw others after him; and such sins in practice as cause the

Name and Truth of God to be Blasphemed, and cannot stand with the power of Godliness; and such practices as in their own nature manifestly subvert that Order, Unity & Peace which Christ hath established in his Church; and particularly all those Scandalous sins for which any person is to be suspended from the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, obstinately persisted in, these being publicly known to the just Scandal of the Church, the Sentence of Excommunication may and ought to proceed according to the Directions hereafter following.

3. But the persons who hold other Errors in Judgement, about points wherein Learned and Godly men possibly may or do differ, and which subvert not the Faith, nor are destructive to Godliness, or that be guilty of such sins of Infirmary as are commonly found in the Children of God, or being otherwise sound in the Faith, and holy in Life (and so not falling under Censure by the former Rules) endeavor to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace; and do yet out of Conscience not come up to the Observation of all those Rules which are or shall be established by Authority for Regulating the outward Worship of God, and Government of his Church, the Sentence of Excommunication for these causes shall not be denounced against them.

4. That when the sin becomes publique, and justly Scandalous, the Offendor shall be dealt withal by the Eldership to bring him to Repentance, and to such a manifestation thereof, as that his Repentance may be publique as the Scandal; but if he remain obstinate, he is at last to be Excommunicated, and in the mean time shall be suspended from the Sacrament of the Lords Supper.

And whereas there be divers and various Judgements touching the power of Excommunication, and the proper subject thereof, for the clearing of Difficulties, avoid

ing of Offences, and preservation of Peace, Let these following Directions be observed.

In the great and difficult cases of Excommunication, whether concerning Doctrine or Conversation, the Claſſical Presbytery upon the knowledge thereof may examine the person, consider the nature of the Offence, with the aggravations thereof; and as they shall see just cause, may Discern and Declare, That he is to be excommunicated, which shall be done by the Eldership of that Congregation whereof he is a Member, with the consent of the Congregation, in this or the like maner :

1. As there shall be cause, several publique Admonitions shall be given to the Offendor (if he appears) and prayers made for him.

2. When the Offence is so hainous, that it cries to Heaven for vengeance, wasteth the conscience, and is generally Scandalous, the Censures of the Church may proceed with more expedition.

3. In the Admonitions let the Fact be charged upon the Offendor, with the clear evidence of the guilt thereof, then let the nature of his sin, the particular aggravations of it, the punishment and curses threatned against it, the danger of Impenitency, especially after such means used, the woful condition of them cast out from the favor of God, and communion of the Saints, the great Mercy of God in Christ to the penitent, how ready and willing Christ is to forgive, and the Church to accept him upon this his serious Repentance: Let these or the like particulars be urged upon him out of some futable places of Holy Scriptures.

4. The same particulars may be mentioned in prayer, wherein the Lord is to be intreated to bless this Admonition to him, and to affect his heart with the consideration of these things, thereby to bring him unto Repentance.

5. If

5. If upon the last Admonition and prayer there be no evidence nor sign of his Repentance, let the dreadful Sentence of Excommunication be pronounced, with calling upon the Name of God in these or the like expressions:

Speak this
in the 3d
person, if
the party
be absent.

Whereas thou N. hast been by sufficient proof convicted of (*Here mention the sin*) and after due Admonition and prayer remainest obstinate, without any evidence or sign of true Repentance; Therefore in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and before this Congregation, I pronounce and Declare thee N. excommunicated and shut out from the communion of the faithful.

Let the Prayer, accompanying the Sentence, be to this effect:

THat God who hath appointed this terrible Sentence, for removing of offences, and reducing of obstinate Sinners, would be present with this his Ordinance, to make it effectual to all those holy ends for which he hath appointed it; That the retaining of the Offenders sin, and shutting him out of the Church may fill him with fear and shame, and break his obstinate heart, and be a means to destroy the flesh, and to recover him from the power of the Devil, that his Spirit may be saved, that others also may be stricken with fear, and not dare to sin so presumptuously, and that all such corrupt Leaven being purged out of the Church (which is the House of God) Jesus Christ might delight to dwell in the midst of them.

6. After the Denunciation of this Sentence, the people are to be warned that they hold him to be cast out of the Communion of the Church, and to shun all Communion with him; Nevertheless, Excommunication dissolveth not the bonds of Civil or Natural Relations, nor exempteth from the duties belonging to them.

The

The order of proceeding to Absolution.

IF after Excommunication the signs of Repentance appear in the Excommunicated person; such as, godly sorrow for sin, as having thereby incurred Gods heavy displeasure, occasioned grief to his Brethren, and justly provoked them to cast him out of their Communion, together with a full purpose of heart to turn from his sin unto God, and to reform what hath been amiss in him; with an humble desire of recovering his peace with God and his people, and to be restored to the light of Gods countenance, and the Communion of the Church; Let him be brought before the Congregation, and there also make a free confession of his sin, with sorrow for it, to call upon God for mercy in Christ, to seek to be restored to the Communion of the Church, promising to God new obedience, and to them more holy and circumspect walking as becometh the Gospel; Let him be pronounced, in the name of Christ, Absolved and free from the Censures of the Church, and declared to have right to all the Ordinances of Christ, with praising of God for his grace, and prayer, that he may be tully accepted to his favor, and hear joy and gladness, to this effect:

To praise God, who delighteth not in the death of a sinner, but that he may repent and live, for blessing the Ordinance of Excommunication, and making it effectual by his Spirit to the recovery of this Offendor; to magnifie the mercy of God through Jesus Christ, in pardoning and receiving to his favor the most grievous Offenders, whensoever they unfeignedly repent and forsake their sins; To pray for assurance of mercy, and forgiveness to this Penitent, and so to bless his Ordinance of Absolution, that he may finde himself loosed thereby; And that the Lord would henceforth so uphold and strengthen him
by

by his Spirit, that being sound in the Faith, and holy in all manner of conversation, God may be honored, the Church edified, and himself saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

*Then shall follow the Sentence of Absolution in these
or the like words ;*

VHereas thou N. hast for thy sin been shut out from the Communion of the Faithful, and hast now manifested thy Repentance, wherein the Church resteth satisfied, In the name of Jesus Christ before this Congregation, I pronounce and declare thee absolved from the Sentence of Excommunication, formerly denounced against thee, and do receive thee to the Communion of the Church, and the free use of all the Ordinances of Jesus Christ, that thou mayest be partaker of all his benefits to thy eternal Salvation.

After this Sentence of Absolution, let the Minister speak to him as to a Brother, exhorting him to Watch and Pray, or comforting him if there be need; Let the Elders imbrace him, and the whole Congregation hold communion with him as one of their own.

F I N I S.

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